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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/990,611	11/21/2001	Lorraine Faxon Meisner	121753-1005	4194

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Winstead Sechrest & Minick PC  
P O Box 50748  
1201 Main Street  
Dallas, TX 75250-0784

EXAMINER
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CHOI, FRANK I

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1616

DATE MAILED: 05/09/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/990,611

Applicant(s)

MEISNER, LORRAINE FAXON

Examiner

Frank I. Choi

Art Unit

1616

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 January 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-8,10-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-8 and 10-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 11/21/2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 18, 21-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for the disclosed process of pretreating the ascorbic acid and ascorbic acid which has been pretreated according to said process in the disclosed amounts and temperatures, does not reasonably provide enablement for other processes of pretreating the ascorbic acid or ascorbic acid pretreated by other processes. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention commensurate in scope with these claims.

The invention is directed to pretreatment of ascorbic acid. The prior art does not appear to disclose pretreatment of ascorbic acid as disclosed in the Specification as such predictability in the art appears to be low. The Specification does not appear to disclose any other method of pretreating ascorbic acid. The claims are broad in that they indicated "pretreatment" but do not define the same in the claim. As such, one of ordinary skill in the art would be required to due undue experimentation in order to determine what other methods would be suitable for pretreating the ascorbic acid which results in the same or similar characteristics of the disclosed invention.

Claims 18,21-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the elements. See MPEP § 2172.01. The omitted elements are the process steps by which the ascorbic acid is pretreated. The Specification explicitly discloses that between 10% and 50% of the ascorbic acid is pretreated and/or stabilized by heating a specified concentration of ascorbic acid at a specified temperature range and pH of at least 3.5 (Pg. 6, lines, 30-33, Pg. 7). The Specification does not appear to disclose or suggest alternative methods of pretreating the ascorbic acid, as such, the process appears to be critical to the invention and should be included in the claims.

See *Superguide Corp. v. DirecTV Enterprises, Inc.*, 69 USPQ2d 1865, 1868 (Fed. Cir. 2004) ("Though understanding the claim language may be aided by explanations contained in the written description, it is important not to import into a claim limitations that are not part of the claim. For example, a particular embodiment appearing in the written description may not be read into a claim when the claim language is broader than the embodiment."); *E-Pass Techs., Inc. v. 3Com Corp.*, 67 USPQ2d 1947, 1950 (Fed. Cir. 2003) ("Interpretation of descriptive statements in a patent's written description is a difficult task, as an inherent tension exists as to whether a statement is a clear lexicographic definition or a description of a preferred embodiment. The problem is to interpret claims in view of the specification' without unnecessarily importing limitations from the specification into the claims."); *Altiris Inc. v. Symantec Corp.*, 65 USPQ2d 1865, 1869-70 (Fed. Cir. 2003) (Although the specification discussed only a single embodiment, the court held that it was improper to read a specific order of steps into method claims where, as a matter of logic or grammar, the language of the method

Art Unit: 1616

claims did not impose a specific order on the performance of the method steps, and the specification did not directly or implicitly require a particular order). The description of “pretreatment” contains some description which is set forth in terms of “relatively”, “typically”, “preferably”, “generally” “if”. As such, it appears that the definition of “pretreatment” may include both essential and nonessential processes. Since it is unclear which are essential and which are not, it is improper to read into the claim the description of “pretreatment” as limitations in the claim. Thus, specific limitations should be set forth in the body of the claim itself’.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1,3-8, 10-18, 21-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schinitzky et al. (US Pat. 4,938,969) in view of Murad (US Pat. 5,804,594), Herstein (US Pat. 5,902,591) and Bassford et al. (US Pat. 2,517,276).

Schinitzky et al. teach a composition and method to reduce epidermal wrinkling resulting from photo-aging comprising ascorbic acid (about 2-20%), tyrosine (about 1-10%) and zinc sulfate (about 0.5-5%) in a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle, for example, hydrophilic lotion, ointment, cream or gel, which is applied once or twice daily (Column 2, lines 38-53, Column 4, lines 34-45, Claims 1, 2).

Murad teaches a composition for treatment of skin overexposed to sunlight and wrinkles comprising a sugar, such as N-acetylglucosamine or glucosamine, amino acids, such as cysteine, methionine or N-acetyl cysteine, ascorbic acid, and a zinc compound, such as zinc sulfate (Column 4, lines 62-68, Columns 5, 6, Column 7, lines 30-41, Column 9, lines 3-7). It is taught that the composition may be formulated as a cream, paste, gel, ointment, solution or suspension in an aqueous liquid, oil-in-water emulsion or a water-in-oil emulsion by any methods of pharmacy which can be applied topically (Column 8, lines 43-49, Column 9, lines 34-45). It is taught that the sugar and amino acids assist in thickening the dermis and supplementing collagen and elastic tissues which reduces wrinkling and lines (Column 5, lines 5-18). It is taught that the addition of ascorbic acid inhibits collagenase and elastase, enzymes which break down collagen and elastic tissues, and assist in the reducing the occurrence of additional wrinkles and facilitate the healing of skin tissues (Column 5, lines 18-22). It is taught that zinc binds collagen fibers and inhibits elastase, an enzyme that also breaks down collagen and elastic tissue (Column 5, lines 22-24).

Herstein teaches that a pH within 3.5 to 4.1 is preferred to facilitate entry of ascorbic acid into the skin and stabilize the ascorbic acid molecule (Column 2, lines 40-47, Column 10, lines 6-17).

Bassford et al. disclose a methods of purifying ascorbic acid in which one of the steps includes dissolving ascorbic acid in distilled water at 60 degrees Celsius, for example 105 g in 140 cc, 100 g in 140 cc, 30 g in 30 cc (Column 4, lines 16-33, Column 5, lines 60-76, Columns 6-8). It is disclosed that when preparing pharmaceutical compounds it is generally advisable to effect the final purification by crystallizing a first crop of pure material in the conventional

Art Unit: 1616

manner which is disclosed as being Experiment B (Column 3, lines 30-35, Column 5, lines 60-68, Column 6, lines 39-76, Column 7).

The difference between the prior art and the claimed invention is that the prior art does not expressly disclose the combination of at least 10% of ascorbic acid, non-toxic zinc salt, water and pH of 3.5 to 4.1. However, the prior art amply suggests the same as the prior art discloses the combination of ascorbic acid and zinc, the use of ascorbic acid up to 20% and that a pH of 3.5 to 4.1 is preferred to facilitate entry of ascorbic acid into the skin. Further, the prior art discloses the preparation of pure ascorbic acid for pharmaceutical use in which one of the steps includes dissolving ascorbic acid in water at 60 degrees Celcius. As such, it would have been well within the skill of and one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the prior art as above with the expectation that the same would facilitate entry of ascorbic acid into the skin and that the combination would be effective in treating or protecting against skin damage due to exposure to the sun. Further, one of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to prepare the ascorbic acid according to the process in Bassford with the expectation that the product would sufficiently pure for pharmaceutical purposes.

Examiner has duly considered Applicant's arguments but deems them unpersuasive.

Applicant argues that the Herstein teaches away from a stable solution, however, Applicant Herstein use the organoclay to stabilize an emulsion not a solution. Further, the stability of Applicant's invention requires pretreatment as disclosed in the Specification, which pretreatment is not set forth in claims 1,3-8, 10-17 (Pg. 6, lines, 30-33, Pg. 7). Applicant cites to page 4, lines 24-25, however, there is no support for the argument that the present invention does not include an organoclay yet does not expand or lose integrity on storage. Applicant's

Art Unit: 1616

Specification at pg. 4, lines 4-7 indicates that expansion or integrity relate to creams with limited water content. Applicant acknowledges that the Specification discloses the use of amine salts. Applicant does not appear to explain the significance of this admission. It was Applicant who argued in a prior response that organoclays contain amine salts which would complex with ascorbic acid. Further, Applicant indicates that neutralized forms of ascorbic acid are within the scope of the invention, as such, Applicant has not shown how the possible complex of amine salts of organoclays with ascorbic acid overcomes the rejection. Taylor is no longer part of the rejection herein.

Herstein teaches that a pH within 3.5 to 4.1 is preferred to facilitate entry of ascorbic acid into the skin and stabilize the ascorbic acid molecule (Column 10, lines 6-17). Applicant argues that Murad teaches away from having a pH of more than 3.5 because Murad discloses oral administration, however, Applicant has provided no showing that pH is irrelevant to oral administration. Even in tablets and capsules, pH is a factor which must be accounted for; for example, see Schonmann et al. (US Pat. 4,894,978), Column 6, lines 48-55). Examiner cites to other oral dosage formulations in which pH is relevant to the formulation of the oral dosage form (See Green et al. (US Pat. 3,857,939), Column 1, lines 48-61 (pH of 4.3-5.2 for chewable ascorbic acid tablets); Ruff et al. (US Pat. 5,358,970), Column 1, lines 25-68, Column 2, lines 1-10 (Use of pH stabilizers in tablets and capsules to inhibit degradation of active ingredient). As such, Applicant's arguments do not show that pH is irrelevant to oral administration. Further, disclosed examples and preferred embodiments do not constitute a teaching away from a broader disclosure or nonpreferred embodiments. In re Susi, 169 USPQ 423 (CCPA 1971). The mere fact that the preferred embodiment is a capsule or tablet does not teach away from the broad

Art Unit: 1616

disclosure which discloses as indicated above that ascorbic acid formulations include aqueous formulations. Thus, Applicant has not shown that Murad teaches away from the claimed invention. "The use of patents as references is not limited to what the patentees describe as their own inventions or to the problems with which they are concerned. They are part of the literature of the art, relevant for all they contain." *In re Heck*, 216 USPQ 1038, 1039 (Fed. Cir. 1983) (quoting *In re Lemelson*, 158 USPQ 275, 277 (CCPA 1968)). A reference may be relied upon for all that it would have reasonably suggested to one having ordinary skill the art, including nonpreferred embodiments. *Merck & Co. v. Biocraft Laboratories*, 874 F.2d 804, 10 USPQ2d 1843 (Fed. Cir.), cert. denied, 493 U.S. 975 (1989). See also *Celeritas Technologies Ltd. v. Rockwell International Corp.*, 47 USPQ2d 1516, 1522-23 (Fed. Cir. 1998) (The court held that the prior art anticipated the claims even though it taught away from the claimed invention. "The fact that a modem with a single carrier data signal is shown to be less than optimal does not vitiate the fact that it is disclosed.").

With respect to Herstein, Applicant has provided no evidence that emulsions cannot have a pH. For example, see Woodward et al. (US Pat. 5,358,990), column 7, lines 50-55 (pH of emulsion was measured); Bissett (US Pat. 5,681,852), Column 8, lines 61-63 (disclosing preferred pH of emulsions). The arguments of counsel cannot take the place of evidence in the record. *In re Schulze*, 145 USPQ 716, 718 (CCPA 1965); *In re Geisler*, 43 USPQ2d 1362 (Fed. Cir. 1997) ("An assertion of what seems to follow from common experience is just attorney argument and not the kind of factual evidence that is required to rebut a prima facie case of obviousness.").

Therefore, the claimed invention, as a whole, would have been *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, because every element of the invention has been collectively taught by the combined teachings of the references.

Claims 1,3-8, 10-18, 21-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schinitzky et al. (US Pat. 4,938,969) in view of Murad (US Pat. 5,804,594), Darr et al. (US Pat. 5,140,043) and Bassford et al. (US Pat. 2,517,276).

Schinitzky et al. teach a composition and method to reduce epidermal wrinkling resulting from photo-aging comprising ascorbic acid (about 2-20%), tyrosine (about 1-10%) and zinc sulfate (about 0.5-5%) in a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle, for example, hydrophilic lotion, ointment, cream or gel, which is applied once or twice daily (Column 2, lines 38-53, Column 4, lines 34-45, Claims 1, 2).

Murad teaches a composition for treatment of skin overexposed to sunlight and wrinkles comprising a sugar, such as N-acetylglucosamine or glucosamine, amino acids, such as cysteine, methionine or N-acetyl cysteine, ascorbic acid, and a zinc compound, such as zinc sulfate (Column 4, lines 62-68, Columns 5, 6, Column 7, lines 30-41, Column 9, lines 3-7). It is taught that the composition may be formulated as a cream, paste, gel, ointment, solution or suspension in an aqueous liquid, oil-in-water emulsion or a water-in-oil emulsion by any methods of pharmacy which can be applied topically (Column 8, lines 43-49, Column 9, lines 34-45). It is taught that the sugar and amino acids assist in thickening the dermis and supplementing collagen and elastic tissues which reduces wrinkling and lines (Column 5, lines 5-18). It is taught that the addition of ascorbic acid inhibits collagenase and elastase, enzymes which break down collagen and elastic tissues, and assist in the reducing the occurrence of

Art Unit: 1616

additional wrinkles and facilitate the healing of skin tissues (Column 5, lines 18-22). It is taught that zinc binds collagen fibers and inhibits elastase, an enzyme that also breaks down collagen and elastic tissue (Column 5, lines 22-24).

Darr et al. discloses that a pH of no more than about 3.5 ensures that greater than 82% of the ascorbic acid remains in the protonated, uncharged form and facilitates entry of ascorbic acid into the skin and stabilizes the ascorbic acid molecule (Column 3, lines 17-33, Column 4, lines 7-18, claims 1-42). Darr et al. discloses that at even at a pH of 4.5, a 5% solution of ascorbic acid remains quite stable and that at a pH of 4.2, 5% ascorbic acid remained stable (Column 5, lines 1-27).

Bassford et al. is cited for the same reasons as above and is incorporated herein to avoid repetition.

The difference between the prior art and the claimed invention is that the prior art does not expressly disclose the combination of at least 10% of ascorbic acid, aminosugar, water and pH of 3.5 to 4.1. However, the prior art amply suggests the same as the prior art discloses the combination of ascorbic acid and glucosamine, the use of ascorbic acid up to 20% and a pH of about 3.5 and that at pHs of 4.2 and 4.5, a 5% solution of ascorbic acid remained stable. As such, it would have been well within the skill of and one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the prior art as above with the expectation that a solution of ascorbic acid at a pH of about 3.5 would be stable and that the combination would be effective in treating or protecting against skin damage due to exposure to the sun. Further, one of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to prepare the ascorbic acid according to the process in Bassford with the expectation that the product would sufficiently pure for pharmaceutical purposes.

Art Unit: 1616

Examiner has duly considered Applicant's arguments but deems them unpersuasive for the same reasons as above to the extent the above is applicable. Further, with respect to Darr, Darr does not teach away from the claimed invention. The claimed invention includes a pH of 3.5. Applicant acknowledges that Darr discloses a pH of less than about 3.5 or no more than about 3.5. The claimed invention has a minimum pH of 3.5. Therefore, Darr discloses a pH falling within the scope of Applicant's claims. As indicated above, the rejection herein is based on a combination of references, as such, the fact that Schinitzky or Murad do not mention pH does not overcome the rejection. Taylor is not part of this rejection.

In the case where the claimed ranges "overlap or lie inside ranges disclosed by the prior art" a prima facie case of obviousness exists. *In re Wertheim*, 191 USPQ 90 (CCPA 1976); *In re Woodruff*, 16 USPQ2d 1934 (Fed. Cir. 1990) (The prior art taught carbon monoxide concentrations of "about 1-5%" while the claim was limited to "more than 5%." The court held that "about 1-5%" allowed for concentrations slightly above 5% thus the ranges overlapped.); *In re Geisler*, 43 USPQ2d 1362, 1365-66 (Fed. Cir. 1997) (Claim reciting thickness of a protective layer as falling within a range of "50 to 100 Angstroms" considered prima facie obvious in view of prior art reference teaching that "for suitable protection, the thickness of the protective layer should be not less than about 10 nm [i.e., 100 Angstroms]." The court stated that "by stating that suitable protection' is provided if the protective layer is about' 100 Angstroms thick, [the prior art reference] directly teaches the use of a thickness within [applicant's] claimed range." ). Similarly, a prima facie case of obviousness exists where the claimed ranges and prior art ranges do not overlap but are close enough that one skilled in the art would have expected them to have the same properties. *Titanium Metals Corp. of America v. Banner*, 778 F.2d 775, 227 USPQ 773

Art Unit: 1616

(Fed. Cir. 1985) (Court held as proper a rejection of a claim directed to an alloy of "having 0.8% nickel, 0.3% molybdenum, up to 0.1% iron, balance titanium" as obvious over a reference disclosing alloys of 0.75% nickel, 0.25% molybdenum, balance titanium and 0.94% nickel, 0.31% molybdenum, balance titanium.).

Therefore, the claimed invention, as a whole, would have been *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, because every element of the invention has been collectively taught by the combined teachings of the references.

### Conclusion

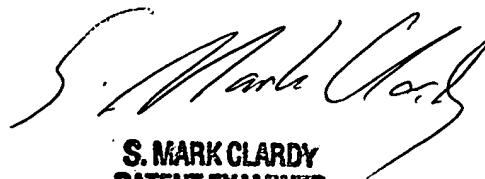
A facsimile center has been established in Technology Center 1600. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:45 AM to 4:45 PM. The telecopier number for accessing the facsimile machine is 571-273-8300.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Frank Choi whose telephone number is (571)272-0610. Examiner maintains a flexible schedule. However, Examiner may generally be reached Monday-Friday, 8:00 am – 5:30 pm (EST), except the first Friday of the each biweek which is Examiner's normally scheduled day off.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's Supervisor, Mr. Gary Kunz, can be reached at 571-272-0887. Additionally, Technology Center 1600's Receptionist and Customer Service can be reached at (571) 272-1600.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

FIC May 4, 2005



**S. MARK CLARDY  
PATENT EXAMINER  
GROUP 1200**

1616